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EVALUATION

*Conferences—Promotion—
Action Research*

New Feature:

Make It With and For Children

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Rather Than
Advocate Fixed Practice

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Best

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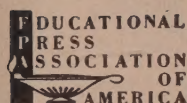
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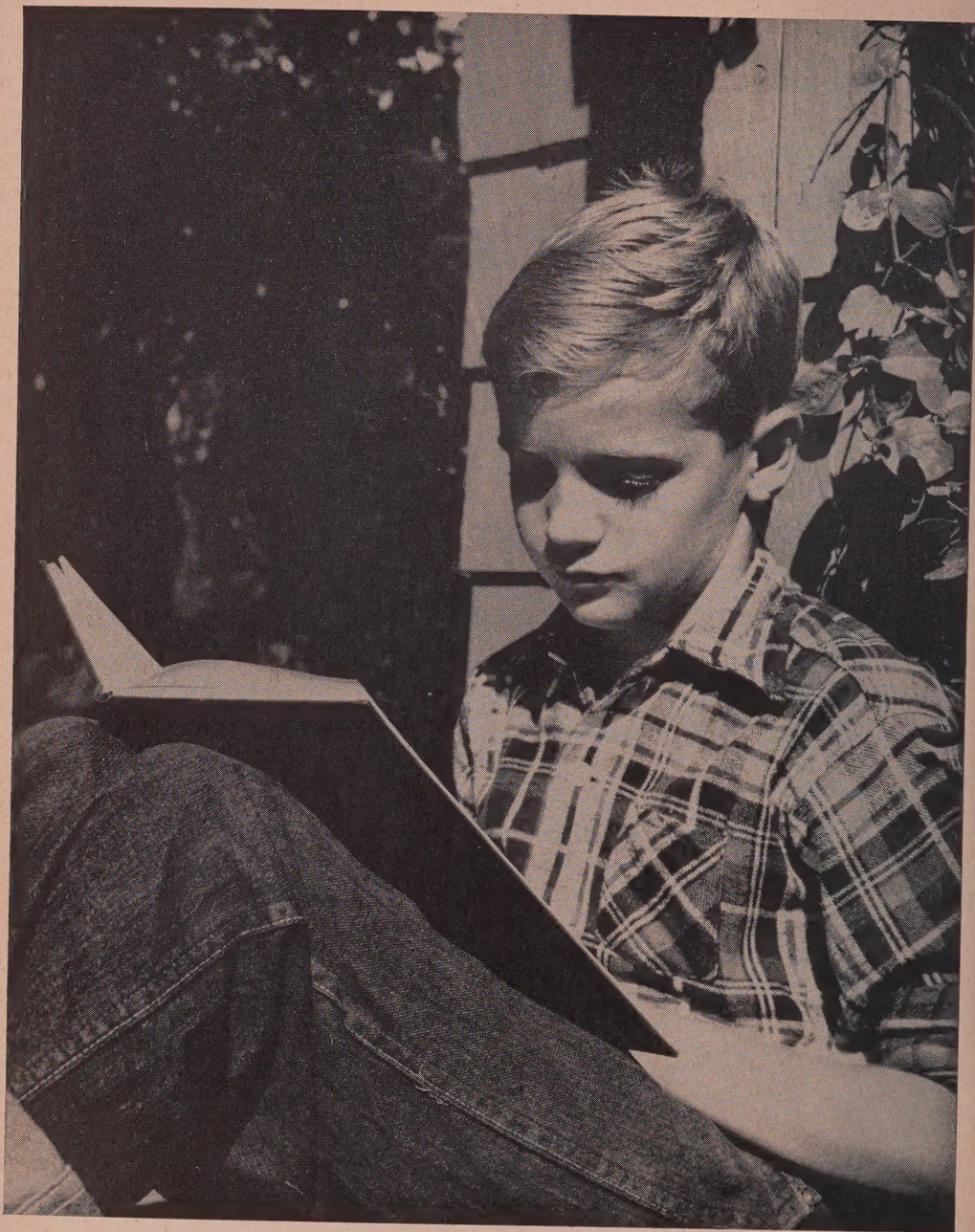


Photo by Eva Luoma

He knew Mrs. Brown saw evaluation as a step in planning, not a rating of an end product.

"Cut Down on My Cussing"

EACH MEMBER OF THE FIFTH GRADE was concluding his first semester's work by going back through his folder which contained things he had completed during the semester such as spelling lists, arithmetic assignments, the names of books read, pictures painted, poems written, plans made, reports of projects and trips. Each was formulating a list of things on which he needed to work harder during the coming semester.

Jimmy's list read:

1. work on my eight table
2. do more painting
3. work harder on my spelling
4.
5. cut down on my cussing
6.

As we try to decide whether children have "learned at their best" it is important to know what they have been trying to learn, what have been the pressures on them, what evidence of desired learning is available, and whether the amount of learning is satisfactory.

We cannot answer these questions ourselves. We can only record the small portion of the evidence we observe and hear. No matter how hard we try, we obtain only a fragment of the total evidence concerning the progress that has been made by each of our thirty pupils. Unless we bring children into the evaluation process to record their goals and their learnings, we do not have sufficient evidence to judge the quality of their learning.

After he had completed his list, Jimmy sat down with his teacher and discussed the extent to which she agreed on the direction he had decided his work should take.

During this conference, Jimmy and Mrs.

Brown agreed on the points that should be discussed at the next pupil-teacher-parent conference.

All persons concerned—the pupil, his parents, and his teacher—are needed in the decision making. What satisfies the pupil may not satisfy the parent or the teacher. The criteria by which to judge the learning which has occurred are formulated as the persons involved share their values and desires.

Jimmy's list is indicative of an essential feature of the situation. He would never have written "cut down on my cussing" if he had not trusted his teacher. He was not afraid to be honest. He knew he would not be penalized for not measuring up to what the teacher thought boys should be. He knew Mrs. Brown saw evaluation as a step in planning, not a rating of an end product. He knew that she recognized that evaluation is not marking.

EVALUATION WHICH PROMOTES "CHILDREN learning at their best" is the part of the learning process in which decisions are made about next steps. To be able to plan the most important next steps it is essential that the person most vitally concerned—the pupil—have the type of relationship with adults which permits the adult to know if pupils have "learned at their best." Evaluation involves agreeing on goals, keeping records of progress, making judgments about the progress and the goals, revising goals as desirable and deciding on next steps. When the pupil, teacher, and parents carry on this process cooperatively, "learning at our best" is promoted.—KIMBALL WILES, professor of education, University of Florida, Gainesville.

Hoping? Or Beginning To Know!

The libraries of teacher education institutions are full of what research experts have found out about children, teaching, and learning. Yet many of us go on hoping we are on the right track. Stephen M. Corey compares traditional research with action research as a means of promoting change in actual teaching situations.

EVERYTHING A TEACHER DOES WITH children in the class, when he is at his best, is based on either the hope or the knowledge that he is helping them become more effective persons.

When we are working most effectively as teachers, whatever we say, whatever we do, the materials we use, the way we use them, our conversations with parents, our attempts at discipline, all result from a more or less conscious thought. In a specific situation the thought might go like this:

A few of my pupils are not doing at all well expressing their ideas about social studies problems during "conversation time." If I do what I can to make these pupils gain better acceptance by their peers, they will improve the quality of their discussion of social studies problems.

This analysis oversimplifies the situation, of course, but it is sufficiently faithful to the facts to raise these important questions:

- How does a teacher know that some pupils need to learn better how to express themselves when they are talking together in a group? Is he just guessing? What kinds of observations did this teacher make that led to the conclusion that something especial should be done to improve the discussion ability of certain boys and girls?

- What is the source of the teacher's hunch that one reason for the inability or unwillingness of a child to express him-

self was his feeling that he wasn't accepted by the other members of the group?

- How does this teacher find out what he should do to help certain pupils gain better acceptance? How does he learn to do what he decides he should do?

- How will the teacher find out what change, if any, has taken place in discussion ability as a consequence of feeling safer and better accepted in the group? How will he know whether or not what he does leads to better acceptance? What kind of evidence will he get?

These four questions, or ones like them, have to be considered in all kinds of teaching at all levels. The answers to them are often based upon hopes, casual impressions, and superficial observations. When this is so, teaching becomes rule of thumb—largely guess work. We never really know. We learn how to do better only occasionally. We don't seem to improve.

But this isn't necessary. Teachers can become increasingly exact and objective and scientific about what they do. Not scientific in the test tube, white-laboratory-coat sense, but in the sense that they (1) base their judgment as to what children need upon more careful observations of their behavior, (2) evolve teach-

Stephen M. Corey is head of the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City.

ing-learning situations to meet these needs from a better understanding of what children and their culture are like and the way boys and girls learn, and (3) test the consequences of their teaching by getting more dependable and appropriate evidence of the changes resulting from what appear to be more promising teaching procedures.

Research on the Firing Line

When we seek answers to important questions about teaching in this way, we become researchers. We study what we do. We begin to know more and more, rather than to guess or hope more and more. This kind of research is often called "action research." It is a method of problem solving that practitioners—teachers, administrators, supervisors—can employ to improve the quality of their decisions and actions. It is research conducted on the firing line.

People whose work requires coping with practical problems work on these problems more exactly and objectively and scientifically. Action research involves a considerable degree of awareness of various methods of problem solving and much emphasis on facts, on evidence. High quality action research represents the other extreme from reaching decisions and taking actions and inferring consequences on the basis of casual impressions and subjective judgments and guesswork.

Plenty of Research But—

For the past forty years, all of us in education have heard a great deal about research. We have been taught to value highly the application of scientific method to the solution of educational problems. Most of what we have learned about research, however, implies that it must be conducted by the well-trained professional investigator. We teachers are then

to use the research findings to improve what we do with children.

This traditional or customary or historical conception of educational research emphasizes the discovery of generalizations or principles of broad applicability. The people conducting the research are rarely called upon to do anything about the problems they conduct research on. Their job is to investigate the difficulties with which other people have to deal. Then classroom teachers or supervisors or administrators who hear or read the results of these investigations are expected to behave consistently with them.

This expectation, as almost everyone admits, has not been fulfilled to anywhere near the extent it was hoped that it might. The libraries of teacher education institutions include thousands of articles and books which report what research experts have found out about children and about teaching and learning. Yet most of us tend to go on doing what we have done in much the same way that we have done it. Even though we read these articles or take courses where the findings are reported, the better practices are apt to remain in our heads as verbal descriptions and not affect our behavior very much.

There are many reasons for this gap between what we—or other people—know we should do, and what we do. One of them, and it is consistent with our knowledge about learning, is that those of us who must do something about practical teaching-learning problems are not apt to improve our behavior because of research unless we are partners in the research.

If we, as teachers, are not involved in the research intended to ameliorate or eliminate a teaching difficulty the research findings are not likely to result in our teaching differently. Being told what

we should do is quite different from finding out, on our own, what we should do.

If we are involved in the investigations we more fully understand their implications. Because we are involved we get practice forming new attitudes and actually performing the acts that the research studies were designed to evaluate. We are studying our own problems, rather than learning what happened when someone else studied problems like ours. Problems are never exactly alike.

Two Research Methods Illustrated

The Conventional Method. A traditional researcher might try to discover the relationship, if any, between a child's acceptance in his classroom group and the quality of his discussion of social studies problems. This researcher would probably be a university professor or a member of a research bureau. He is interested in developing a body of theory about the factors that influence clarity of oral expression. He is thinking about sixth-grade youngsters, and has visited several classes. This hunch or hypothesis occurs to him: "One of the important factors that influences the quality of discussion by a sixth-grade child of social studies problems is the extent to which he is accepted in the group, is wanted and liked."

An inquiry to test this hypothesis might be designed in this fashion. The investigator would first want to be sure that he had a representative sample of all sixth-grade pupils, and he would go to great pains to make certain that this was the case. His reason for wanting this representative sample is his interest in having his findings apply to all sixth-grade youngsters rather than only to those who served as subjects for his study.

He might keep records of discussions in his sample of classes in order to have data for making inferences about the creativity and penetration of the comments made by particular boys and girls.

He probably would get sociometric data to establish two sub-populations. One would include a group of children who were not accepted by the other children. The other population would consist of youngsters who were accepted—who felt that they really belonged.

He would try to keep these two groups constant in respect to age, sex, intelligence, and social studies background. Then he would analyze the quality of the discussion of these two "equated" groups of boys and girls and might come to some such conclusion as this: "There is a significant difference in the quality of discussion by sixth-grade children of social studies problems between accepted and non-accepted children." He then would publish the result of this inquiry.

The presumption would be that teachers of sixth-grade youngsters would hear about this carefully conducted investigation. They might read it. They might be told about it in some inservice or pre-service training course. Then, because they had learned that there was a substantial relationship between acceptance in the class group and quality of thinking as represented in discussion, the expectation would be that they would work harder to do whatever they might be able to do to bring the unaccepted youngsters into the group in a sociological sense.

This kind of research is helpful and it may suggest things teachers can do in their own classes if they happen to hear about the investigation, or remember it at a time when they are concerned about the quality of their pupil's discussion. The researcher does not have a personal, firsthand responsibility for doing anything to help boys and girls im-

These illustrations are adapted from a panel discussion reported in the *Teachers College Record* (p. 247) for February 1953 (vol. 54).

prove their ability to discuss social problems.

The Action Research Method. If a particular teacher became concerned about the same type of problem he might decide to do some action research in order to cope with it more adequately.

This teacher worried because some of his pupils did not seem to improve as he thought they should in the quality of their discussions of social studies problems. As he considered this problem, and talked with friends, and read what he could of reports of research conducted by other people, he thought he noticed that many of the youngsters who seemed to grow least in their ability to discuss social studies problems were also the youngsters who were on the fringes of the group sociometrically.

Now this hunch might eventually impress him as being so promising that he would proceed to test it—in order to be a better teacher. He might test it thoughtfully and carefully, getting good evidence at every step, or he might proceed casually and uncritically. In other words, his action research might be of poor or good quality. But only in the latter case could he have much confidence in his conclusions.

Perhaps he first used a simple sociometric choice technique for finding out a bit more objectively who the unaccepted youngsters really were. Then he devised a method to appraise the relative quality of the discussion in the social

studies classes where there were rejected youngsters.

His efforts next might be directed to doing a number of things to help these boys and girls gain better group acceptance. As the sociometric evidence indicated that they were working their way into the group he would look for any change in the quality of their discussion.

At the end of a semester or a year he might come out with this tentative conclusion, based upon the best evidence he could get: "As this or that was done to bring these peripheral youngsters into the group, the quality of their participation in social studies discussion situations improved."

Then he would generalize. And the generalization, again a tentative one, might be: "In future situations of this sort, where I am eager to have boys and girls grow in their ability to discuss social studies problems thoughtfully, I will, from the very beginning, pay especial attention to the extent to which all of the youngsters are integrated into the group's social structure.

Until more and more of us try, as this teacher did, to *study* what we are doing, to conduct action research to better our own practices, improvement in our ways of working with boys and girls is apt to come very slowly. And this action research is quite interesting to engage in. Most of us feel better when we begin to know, rather than having so often to hope or guess.

ONE CANNOT HURRY THE GROWTH WHICH HAS ITS ORIGIN DEEP WITH-
in a person nor can this growth be measured day by day or at any
inflexible stated time, for it is the process by which the individual
selects and rejects that which will be made into his very being.—
MARION NESBITT in *A Public School for Tomorrow*.

To Promote or Not To Promote?

Here is a concise discussion of an old question. John Goodlad presents the arguments commonly given for nonpromotion and for promotion, he lists what we know about the learning process from research, and presents some answers for the question.

TO PROMOTE OR NOT TO PROMOTE . . . That is the question that will plague teachers—several hundred thousand teachers—this coming June. And it is a question that has plagued them each year for decades. Had Rip Van Winkle been a teacher, and had he dozed off in 1934 while deliberating the fate of thirty youngsters, he might have resumed his deliberations quite naturally on awakening in 1954. Not a soul would laugh; not a soul would consider his activities bizarre. Only the thankful thirty, spared through Rip's somnolent sojourn, might rejoice that the belated decisions would now have no bearing upon their lives.

Some claim that promotion scarcely can be considered a significant mid-century educational problem. "Why, I seldom find it necessary to retain more than three children," they may add. Three children out of, say, thirty? That's ten percent. And ten percent amounts to two and one half million elementary-school children in all of America. But it must be recognized that many schools promote all or nearly all pupils. Let's be very conservative, then, and say that only one million elementary-school children are retained in their present grades each year. Promotion an insignificant problem? One could hardly agree.

Not to Promote

Why retain a child? Let us think through some of the reasoning that must

lie behind a million decisions not to promote. We may not agree with them, but the following are some of the reasons often given to justify nonpromotion:

- When promotion is assured, pupils are unconcerned about their school work, developing poor work habits and careless attitudes.
- Bright children come to resent equal promotion rewards for work that is obviously inferior.
- Because of the need for teachers to spend a disproportionate amount of time with slow-learners, the presence of these children in the room serves as a hindrance to progress. The range of achievement is widened and group homogeneity reduced.
- Achievement levels are enhanced through the repetition of only partially learned material.
- Immature children, through grade repetition, are more likely to find suitable play and work companions at the lower grade level.
- The promoted slow-learner, unable to do the work of the grade, frustrated and discouraged, develops inferiority feelings which adversely affect his social relationships and personality development.

To Promote

There are many people who believe that slow-learning children should be promoted, regardless of present levels of attainment. Again, we may not agree with the arguments put forth to support this position but let's examine a few of them:

- The possibility of nonpromotion is a threat that constitutes negative motivation. Children learn best under conditions of positive motivation and therefore should be promoted.
- Children distribute themselves from poor to excellent on each of the many school en-

John I. Goodlad is professor of education, director of the Division of Teacher Education, Emory University; and director, Agnes Scott-Emory Teacher Education Program, Georgia.

deavors in which they engage, usually with only slight variations from child to child on the continuum. To average these attainments is unrealistic. To determine arbitrary cutting points for passing or failing demands a refinement in judgment that defies human capacities.

- The presence of older, repeating children in a classroom decreases group homogeneity.

- Learning is enhanced when children move on to new endeavors instead of experiencing the dullness and boredom of repetition.

- Grade repetition results in over-ageness which, in turn, produces behavior problems requiring special disciplinary action.

- Promotion retains approximately equal chronological age as a common factor and results in improved personal and social relationships.

What Are the Facts?

It is vividly apparent that the two sets of arguments are virtually identical. Each claims for itself the same virtues and, for the other, the same vices. Now for both to be right, obviously, is impossible. Either there is nothing to choose between the two practices or then one must be superior to the other on the questions in debate. What are the facts?

Fortunately, a considerable body of research is available. This research has been summarized elsewhere¹ and the reader is urged to go to the sources. On each of the arguments above, where there is research evidence in any acceptable form, that evidence points clearly to the fact that *slow-learning children profit significantly more from promotion than from nonpromotion*. They attain higher achievement levels when promoted, require less disciplinary action, display more positive attitudes toward school and teachers, and appear to enjoy more satisfactory social and personal lives. It should be clearly understood

that promotion is no universal panacea for learning disabilities. It simply is the more defensible of two promotion alternatives.

Neither Is the Answer

The crux of the promotion issue is that there ought not to be any alternatives. *There ought not be a decision to make*. Promotion and nonpromotion are both inconsistent with certain significant insights into children and their learning:

- Neither promotion nor nonpromotion, in and of itself, can change a child's basic learning rate.

- Arbitrary grade norms for a field of study usually are approximated at a given time by less than half the children in that grade.

- A child seldom approximates arbitrary grade norms in all areas of endeavor. He may be significantly above in one and below in another, and only slightly above or below in still others.

- The spread in mental age among a group of children, already as much as four years in the first grade, becomes greater as these children progress through the elementary school. The spread in academic attainment, in turn, will tend to keep pace with the broadening spread in mental age, especially under conditions of good teaching.

In the light of these facts, how can concepts either of promotion or nonpromotion be applied meaningfully? Susie is at third-grade expectancy in all areas except arithmetic where she lags behind at low second-grade level. Teddy's work spreads out from the second to the fifth grade but if all his attainments were averaged, his placement would be only three months into the third grade. Mary is very advanced. She is at the fifth-grade level in all her work but is very small for her age. All three are completing their third year at school. Should Susie be promoted and Teddy retained? Should Teddy be promoted and Susie retained?

¹ John I. Goodlad, "Research and Theory Regarding Promotion and Nonpromotion," *Elementary School Journal*, L111 (November, 1952), 150-155.

Should Mary be advanced to the sixth grade? Are these really the questions to which teachers' time should be devoted?

Neither promotion nor nonpromotion materially changes the natural heterogeneity ever-present in a group of six-year-olds, nine-year-olds, or twelve-year-olds. This statement has been amply documented. (See, for example, Walter W. Cook, *Grouping and Promotion in the Elementary Schools*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1941.) Miss Stevens must make provision for those children who read well or poorly, are large or small, get along well with others or have difficulty sharing. Keeping back two or three children each year doesn't help her or her colleagues. It may lull her into thinking, for a few blissful moments, that she has a homogeneous group. Alas, even groups of two aren't homogeneous! Promotion and nonpromotion are merely the trappings of an educational era that should be long past. They do absolutely nothing to ease or expedite the job of the teacher. They certainly do nothing for children.

Several Answers—Not One

To promote or not to promote . . . What is the answer? There are several answers rather than one.

First, it must be recognized that most teachers in America today work in a system of grade classification requiring that children move from step to step through it. It is recognized, further, that courses of study, textbooks, and even teachers are organized around the grade concept. When children are brought together in groups of thirty and more under such a grade classification system, it soon becomes apparent that some children deviate so markedly in certain characteristics that the desirability of retaining them in the group comes in for questioning.

Under such an organizational setup, retention of some children, while the group as a whole progresses to the next step, occasionally appears to be a logical solution. [The author deplores the circumstances over the act of retention itself.] In the face of ample research evidence, to the effect that nonpromotion less frequently than promotion results in favorable later adjustment of children, the teacher should be cautioned to ponder carefully each instance of doubtful promotion. When he cannot say with conviction, "Knowing this child as I do, the chances for successful school experience next year and in subsequent years are greater if he be retained," then he is advised to give the child the benefit of any existing doubt and promote him. We can ill afford to ignore the research that is before us.

But, under such circumstances, the act of promoting or retaining is only the beginning. The repeater must be provided for. Simply to do over work that was inadequately done before is not the answer. The year with younger classmates must be filled with exciting challenges; not dulled with the repetition of activities long since wrung dry of interest and stimulation. To promote the slow-learner to tasks far beyond his comprehension likewise is no kindness. Whether slow-progress children be regularly or irregularly promoted, adequate subsequent provision for their needs is essential.

These are short-term answers to the promotion question. In a sense, they constitute tardy treatment for a very sick horse. But now, let us go back to an earlier statement that neither nonpromotion nor promotion is the real answer. Needed is an educational organization that facilitates continuous progress of all children in each of the various facets of their development.

Is it not logical that children who are

ready for more advanced work in reading should proceed to it, free from the artificial restrictions of grade barriers? Is it not logical that certain of these children, slow in arithmetic, should proceed slowly with appropriate work in this field?

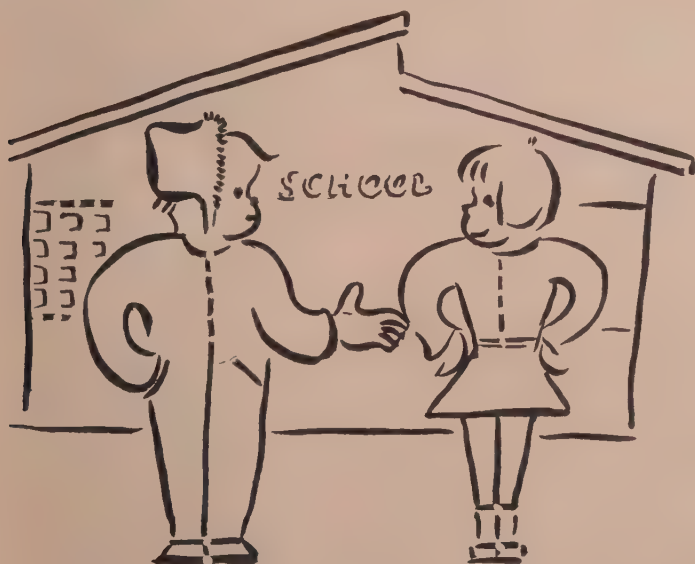
These are the realities with which we are faced. Is it not time that we adapted organizational procedures to fit them? The time for us to abandon our Procrustean lock-step system that chops children to make them fit the norms is long past. Instruction has for too long been the handmaiden of organization.

The long-term answer, then, is the elimination of those grade barriers that have given rise to a host of fallacious notions about pupil progress, of which the fantasy that children should arrive precisely at a given "norm" each June is the most preposterous. Primary unit plans—such as those experimented with in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the Nathaniel Hawthorne School in University

City, Missouri, to cite only two examples—constitute a step in the right direction.

Perhaps years of experimentation with such plans will show us at long last that grade barriers are as unreasonable above the third grade as they are for the first three grades.

The obvious result, of course, is that promotion and nonpromotion simply will disappear from school practice—yes, even from our vocabularies. With the philosophy of continuous progress—and there is a vast difference between "continuous progress" and "social promotion" or any other kind of one hundred percent promotion—firmly entrenched, and grade barriers no longer existent, to promote or not to promote no longer will be a question. Let us hope that this Utopia is so imminent that should any 1954 Rip Van Winkle doze off in the midst of his promotion meditations, continuation of his activities on awakening in 1974 would be absurd, indeed!



Arne Randall

"Don't bewilder her. She doesn't expect you to be in that stage yet."

Three-Way Conferences

Child—Parent—Teacher

Should the child be present in a conference evaluating his growth at school? If so, what is his role? G. Wesley Sowards, assistant professor, College of Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, discusses the values and ways of having three-way conferences.

INCREASINGLY OVER THE PAST FEW years school people have been probing for a more complete and effective evaluation program. An important aspect has been the earnest efforts of both lay and professional groups to develop a more realistic program for reporting to parents the growth and development of their children. There is hardly a school community in which this has not been a recurring problem.

In most instances, after the words and phrases of these verbal battles have cleared away, we find agreement that the actual meeting between teacher and parent—that is the teacher-parent conference—holds the most promise for increasing the effectiveness of our reporting efforts. Many school systems are developing a partial or complete conference base for reporting purposes.

As conferences take place, a number of highly related and important questions take form. Some of these questions arise from those who see a missing side in the two-sided conferences between parent and teacher that are the rule in most places. They ask whether we are or are not leaving out a third most important conference member—the child himself. They see the child—the learner—as actually the most directly concerned person in the whole evaluation process. The kinds of questions that follow are natural ones:

- Should these conferences be triangular situations—teacher, pupil, and parent?
- Would the child gain from being present at the conference?
- Would the conference itself be of more value to all concerned if the child was present?
- If the child is to be present, what should be the nature of the conference?

These questions are basic, provocative, and controversial. Let us explore the matter of child participation in evaluation conferences. The ideas presented are not final answers. Rather, they are presented from a position which seems sound to the writer. Others may agree, disagree, or add to as the case may be.

Stated directly: The child should be included in the regularly scheduled reporting conferences that are held throughout the school year, making these meetings triangular in character, with teacher, pupil, and parent in attendance.

There may well be conferences during the school year, initiated either by teacher or parent, for a specific purpose which should not include the concerned child. It would seem to be perfectly clear that at times a teacher or parent may be seeking or giving information, the very nature of which precludes the child's presence. The exclusion of the child from these conferences is certainly urged.

In like manner the teacher and pupil engage in almost continuous evaluative conferences as an integral part of the

ongoing learning experiences being developed in the classroom. Naturally, parents are not present at these times.

Both of these situations are construed here as being part of, but apart from regularly scheduled conferences. These may be held two to four times during the school year when the growth and achievement of the past six to nine weeks is summarized and interpreted for each child. This information is then communicated to the concerned persons. It is at these conferences that I would urge the inclusion of both parent and child.

Why Include the Child?

Child participation in teacher-parent-child reporting conferences seems to be most sound and essential on two counts:

In a democratic society the individual is held supreme. Because of this, each person is given the opportunity and the responsibility for making many choices. Some choices may affect the choice-maker alone; usually other people are affected, too. The very interdependent nature of our society dictates that we all make wise choices. Many of the choices we make are good or poor depending upon how well we actually know ourselves; or how effective we are at appraising our own abilities. Knowledge of self is an essential part of wise self-direction.

It is necessary for us to utilize every available opportunity to help children, as they move along through their school experience, to become well acquainted with themselves. We need to help them to identify their strengths as well as their weaknesses. They must be helped to perceive what they do well and what they do not do so well.

Probably more important would be our efforts to help children to develop skills necessary to self-evaluation. The individual is not just naturally able to do this; it must be learned. The elemen-

tary school should feel responsible for helping children to become skillful in these ways.

Formal reporting periods, evaluating as they do a span of several weeks, are important to the child as well as to the parent. The child, too, needs to be helped to identify his emerging aptitudes and abilities. Society expects him to be able to contribute to the maximum of his potential, and he needs to be able to ascertain that maximum.

Studies in the psychology of learning point rather conclusively to the fact that knowledge of improvement has a positive effect upon learning. Knowledge of the results of one's efforts to learn, even though unsuccessful, has a more positive effect upon subsequent learning than does a lack of such knowledge. This would seem to indicate that we should utilize all opportunities we have to keep children well informed as to the progress they are making. Such information should be directly contributory to further progress. The very goal-setting, goal-seeking nature of the human organism makes it essential that he be informed directly relative to progress toward a goal.

For these two reasons it seems highly desirable to include child participation in conferences that are held regularly for purposes of reporting a complete picture of growth and achievement in school.

Child Actively Participates

It is one thing to recommend that teacher, parent, and pupil sit together at reporting conferences and quite another to put such a recommendation actually into practice. The experienced teacher will immediately sense that such a conference could be utterly disastrous for the child. If he simply occupies a third chair, and becomes the passive recipient of praise and reproof from teacher and

parent, he would undoubtedly be better off not to be there at all. Especially is the reproof apt to loom so large as to blot out all signs of success.

I have observed children in such situations, with mother verbally and visually chastising the child every time the teacher so much as intimated that further improvement was possible or desirable. Most such occasions end with a youngster in or near the point of tears, and a teacher vowing to himself that never again will he include the child and parent at the same conference.

This surely is not a positive learning experience for the child, nor actually a satisfying experience for the parent or the teacher. If such an episode seemed to be the only one possible I would not suggest child participation. On the contrary, I believe that we can develop triangular conferences that can be informative experiences for all concerned.

Suggestions for Success

The key to the first approach is to be found in the phrase "child participation," that is, the child as active participant in the reporting conference. The child would be doing much of the reporting to the parent himself. To be sure the teacher would be actively involved in the reporting operation, but jointly with the learner. He would be adding to, underscoring and interpreting, agreeing with, as the conference proceeded.

The degree to which the teacher or the child would dominate, in a sense, the conference would be determined in great measure by the age of the child. This is to say that the participation of a seven-year-old in such a conference would be different from the participation of an eleven-year-old. A first grader's reporting role would naturally be a more limited one than would a sixth grader's.

Increasing maturity would certainly

increase the involvement of the child. This is quite reasonable. Our concern would not arise because the state of maturity dictates a restricted beginning for young children; we would be concerned if this limited sort of participation was not continually expanded and increased commensurate with the age of the child.

Such an active role for children in reporting conferences has direct implications for the total program of evaluation in any classroom. This would mean that between teacher and pupil there would need to be a continuing, highly meaningful sort of appraisal. These regularly scheduled reporting times, coming probably about every nine weeks, would be "bumps" or "bulges" on a continuum. For teacher and pupil there would need to be summarizing conferences in preparation for the parent-attended one. Decisions would have to be made as to what should be included in the scant 20 to 30 minutes available. Samples of work would be selected from the cumulative work-sample folder for use in the conference. There would need to be some agreement as to reporting to be done by the child, or by the teacher or both. All of this, although prior to the parent attended conference, is active involvement in evaluation for the learner. Such preparation would lead directly into the formally scheduled reporting conference. Here we would see teacher and pupil together reporting the results of the past nine weeks to the parent.

There are school systems that ask the child to be present at the reporting conference for they see him as the central figure and really the most concerned person in the evaluation picture. He does not help to prepare for the conference as has been suggested. In these systems the conference has been expanded to include the child—that is, he is present. However, he is assigned a passive role. It is

suggested that in such situations the report actually be addressed to the child in the main, and not to the parent. Whatever is reported as evidence of desirable growth, or lack of it, should be done in such a way as to be meaningful to the child. It will also, I believe, be meaningful to the parent. You may well wish to address certain remarks directly to the parent. The majority of the time, however, you would be speaking to child and parent, primarily to the former with the latter an attentive listener. This sort of procedure will help to keep the child

from being simply a passive recipient of information, indirectly received. Thus, the learner is not forced to make sense for himself from adult directed and adult-phrased opinions and conclusions.

Parent-teacher reporting conferences would be improved significantly with the inclusion of the child as a full partner in such scheduled conferences. After all, children are the foci of all such conferencing. We are missing an opportunity and dodging a responsibility if they are not present.

Evaluation Promotes School-Community Understanding

By IRWIN A. HAMMER and RALPH H. THOMPSON

Good public relations and, even more importantly, school-community cooperation can be improved by the evaluation program of the school.

ALL OF US ARE JUSTLY CONCERNED about the school-community conflicts involving such problems as teaching procedures and curriculum emphasis. Many of us are working to replace discord with the harmony and understanding which is necessary to good morale and mental hygiene for teachers, parents, and pupils alike. Success in our effort demands that the program of the school not be developed apart from the life, prevailing beliefs, and customs of the community.

It is not the prerogative of the teacher or of professional groups working alone

to determine what the school should do for the child. The efforts of the teachers and parents must complement each other. Together they must determine the purposes of the school and together they must decide how well these purposes are being achieved. The commonality of our purposes and understandings will determine our confidence in what other people say and do, the meanings we attach to their behavior, and the way we get along together. Active partnership in evaluating the work of children can do much to bridge the chasm created by the misunderstanding that often exists between teachers and parents.

Evaluation begins with a statement of purposes. In a very real sense evaluation is a process of weighing evidences of progress toward an accepted set of objectives or purposes. Until these purposes or goals are stated and accepted through

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cooperative decision, no appraisal of progress can be made. In a democracy the formulation of educational objectives must become a joint undertaking of all persons affected by the school program. Wherever the curriculum and teaching methods are dictated by professional experts, by traditionalists, by special interest groups, or by teachers working alone, there is certain to be discord within and between the school and community. Curriculum consultants, teachers, parents, nonparent citizens, pupils, and special interest groups must all share in deciding educational purposes.

The process of sharing will not, however, eliminate all the hazards to be encountered in the democratic determination of educational purposes. There is the danger that local interests may narrow the curriculum to provincial dimensions and exclude regional, national, and international considerations. A further danger is the influence of individuals who carry prestige or of those who are more vocal and aggressive. A third danger is that purposes are frequently collected or assembled rather than developed and kept internally consistent.

Evaluation encompasses more than just what happens in the classroom. The ways in which a community educates a child are diverse and complex. Many special interest groups or agencies are deliberately educating the child in his out-of-school life. Their influences are frequently at cross-purposes because each deals only with a segment of the child's total development. In addition, informal activities educate him. Among these are the sandlot ball game, the paper route, the neighborhood gang, the movie theater, the chores at home, and the radio and TV program.

One of the commonly accepted goals of society is to educate the child for citizenship. If this goal is to be achieved

in the face of divergent educational forces, then the school, the home, and the community working together must determine how these agencies and activities are to influence the child. This diversity of influences upon the child's education for citizenship illustrates the impossibility of evaluating the achievement of this and other education goals by what happens in the classroom alone.

Evaluation involves the appraisal of pupil progress in achieving accepted goals. The phrase "reporting pupil progress" is generally used to describe an act in which the teacher tells the parent and the pupil where the pupil stands in comparison with his classmates and with the teacher's standards of achievement. This one-way analysis of pupil progress often produces misunderstanding, frustration, and confusion for both child and parent because their goals differ in meaning from the more formally stated goals of the teacher.

At present more schools are adopting the discussion-conference method of appraisal because it helps to clarify goals. Parents, pupils, and teachers in their joint appraisal cannot avoid the consideration of personality development, emotional stability, group behavior, and attitudes, as well as other qualitative objectives. Furthermore, the interdependence of these behavior goals with academic achievement is inescapably recognized. Each participant in the conference makes a special and necessary contribution to the appraisal of pupil progress.

A program of evaluation must be indigenous to the particular school and community. The idea that there is a uniform and best method of beginning and continuing evaluation disregards the fact that each school-community is different from every other. The purposes, morale, and climate of opinion are in large measure particular. Whenever a school-com-

munity begins to ask questions about its schools, it is launching a program of evaluation. How it will continue depends upon the pattern of cooperative inquiry and subsequent policy-making unique to its setting.

One community began to evaluate its school by holding a group conference of parents and teachers in each classroom prior to the PTA meeting. Another school held afternoon coffee and discussion meetings for parents and teachers once a week. Many communities have used comprehensive opinion inventories to stimulate interest in the evaluation of their schools. Some communities have organized school-community councils to give continuous direction to evaluation. The school system of one large city continued its program of evaluation by publishing small, cleverly-illustrated booklets describing the work of the school. These few examples illustrate, in part, how evaluation may begin and continue through cooperative effort.

Facility and effectiveness in communication are basic to the continued success of an evaluation program. If education is to serve the common purposes of all the people, then parents, pupils, and teachers must find it easier to talk to each other. They must also state their beliefs with clarity and precision. Essential to this mutual interchange of ideas is a respect for persons and their individual orientations to life.

Basic to communication is the understanding of other people's values. Most critics of the schools make value judgments about education in terms of the

objectives and methods they knew as school children. Although they have accepted technological changes in our material civilization, they are frequently less willing to accept modification of teaching procedures. If the teacher were to work side by side with the garage mechanic, for example, he would begin to understand the why and how of the mechanic's job. Citizens working closely with teachers can understand educational methods. This unity of action among teachers and other members of the community means that departures from established classroom procedures will more readily be understood and accepted.

The instruments of evaluation must be understood by those concerned and the results easily translated into pupil guidance. Pupil appraisal has become a complex process. Every year sees the multiplication of testing devices and techniques. With the growing use of these tests, the dangers of misinterpretation increase.

It is not enough that only the teacher shall understand the meanings and uses of these instruments of evaluation. Parents and pupils must also be able to understand their results. As parents, pupils, and teachers look at the results of pupil appraisal, they determine what should be done, under what conditions it can be done, and how to get it done. *In reality, a thorough-going program of evaluation cannot be anything less than genuinely democratic. Understanding must be common. Purposes must be mutual. Deliberations must be joint. Good school-community relations are the natural outcome of such procedures.*

JUST AS A SCHOOL IS AFFECTED BY THE PRESSURES OF SOCIETY, SO IS it enriched by the resources of society.—MARION NESBITT in *A Public School for Tomorrow*.

Let's Find Out

WHAT CHILDREN THINK

Children are observant and thoughtful. Their wonderings about the world in which they live are their attempts at evaluating. Nancy Larrick, a former teacher and at present education director of the Children's Book Department, Random House, New York City, has illustrated with children's responses.

AS WE TALK OF EVALUATION, I ALWAYS want to say, "Let's find out what the children think!" They have seen us in action, they have made up the group, they know how our efforts have affected them. Best of all they readily reveal what they think if they are given the opportunity. And sometimes they do it quite unconsciously without any motivation from parents or teachers. The important thing is for us to recognize the availability and significance of this kind of evaluation and then to watch with seeing eyes and listen with hearing ears.

Children Say What They Think

A few years ago the Sunday Magazine Section of *The New York Times* gave several pages to the notes written by various third graders to their teacher throughout the year. She had realized that individual children often had something to say to her at a time when the rush of the day's schedule made her too busy to listen. "Write me a note," she would tell them, "and put it in the second drawer of my desk so I can read it later." Evidently her sincerity showed in the tone of her voice, for notes poured in—some that were gay and exuberant, some wistful and lonely, a few that were genuinely troubled and anxious. Thus out of the mouths of her third graders, she learned to know what they were thinking as she would never have learned otherwise.

Several years ago when I was editing a group of classroom weekly magazines, we invited each of our young readers to write of one thing he wondered about. In a few weeks we had over 6300 replies. Slightly over forty-three percent wondered about some phenomenon of natural science, thus showing their interest in and their hunger for this kind of subject matter. Here are some of the children's own statements:

I wonder what is at the bottom of the ocean.

I wonder how an island keeps floating out in the lake.

I wonder where the stars go in the daytime.

I wonder whether people live on the moon.

Some of these children told of wondering about their teacher and school:

I wonder if I am going to get my work in on time. I wish I could be faster than I am.

I wonder why school doesn't end. It is tiresome just sitting in these wiggly desks and having to do tests and do arithmetic. But worst of all is spelling. I wish summer would come.

I have been wondering, do teachers have pets. They say that they don't but it seems that there are two or three girls in my room that always get to do everything.

I wonder why the teacher always scolds you when you don't have your lessons done or when you don't get a few problems right.

I wonder how old my teacher is . . . I like teachers that laugh. My first-grade teacher never laughed. But my third-grade teacher laughs a lot.



Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

They have seen us in action, they have made up the group, they know how our efforts have affected them.

Some children show anxiety about their personal relationships:

Sometimes I wonder if anyone likes me. They act as if they don't . . . They just go off and leave me behind. Then I seem to wonder if they like me.

I wonder why I always get blamed all the time when I tease my brother. He always starts it. I wonder why I always want to tease him.

I wonder why I am not as pretty as the other girls I know. If I was as pretty as Dorothy everyone would like me. She may have straight hair but she is still prettier than me.

I wonder if I am good or bad . . . When my aunt or uncle come over they say I have been nice when they leave. But my mother and father say that I'm just a worry. That's why I don't know.

I wonder how come all big children blame things on little children that little children didn't do.

I wonder about playing on Saturday because I have no one to play with and I don't know where to go.

I wonder why do some children be so mean all the time.

A few go deep in their own well of loneliness and distress:

I wonder if doctors will ever discover a cure for polio so I can throw away my crutches.

I wonder why my mother divorced my dad.

What Do They Mean?

As we try to analyze these comments of children—some of them so plaintive—we may well ask what they mean, what they tell us. It seems to me they show, first of all, that children are observant and thoughtful. With some children the observation and questions go no deeper than to wonder about the island that seems to be floating on the lake. But with others the wonderings pierce to the heart of our educational procedure and to the child's own place in his world.

Many of these children are trying to

make evaluations. They question the value of report cards and tests. They seek to find the causes for their own acceptance or rejection by their peers. And some of them—like the fourth-grade boy who wondered whether he was good or bad—are frankly confused by adult standards of evaluation.

Most important, I believe, these notes show that there are children who want to tell about themselves. Like the youngsters whose notes were reprinted in *The New York Times Magazine* these boys and girls seem to welcome a chance to talk on paper and know they will have a friend to read their messages.

How Can We Get Their Help?

The real job, then, is to win the friendship and confidence of children in such a way that they will share with us their most pertinent thoughts and observations on which to base joint evaluations. Winning friendships and confidence is a complex process—slowly achieved and easily shattered. The tone of voice, the lift of an eyebrow, the flexibility to adjust to individual needs—all of these may help build good rapport between teacher and pupil.

With that rapport established, the child's own thinking and evaluating may be observed in both direct and indirect ways. Direct ways are those devices by which we ask his opinion or advice on certain questions. What was your happiest day at school? If our class could take a one-day trip, where would you like to have us go? What would you like to learn to make with your hands? When do you have the most fun with your family? When do you have the most fun at play? If you could do the one thing you like to do most, what would it be? What could we do to make our group happier?

Equally pertinent information may be

obtained by asking youngsters to write of their three wishes: "I wish I were. I wish I could. I wish I had." Many teachers gather such bits of information informally through conversations with children at lunch time or on the playground.

Diaries are another rich source of information. Sometimes children prefer to keep their diaries confidential—"secret" is their word—and surely they should have that privilege. But others eagerly bring their diaries for the teacher to enjoy.

The indirect ways are even more frequently used although they are sometimes more difficult to interpret. Indirect ways are those activities of children which inadvertently reveal their thinking and their evaluating. Listen to stories that children tell or write. Watch them acting out their little plays. When Linda's story tells about a classroom of quarrelsome children, she may be commenting on her own classroom relations. When she makes the mother a nagger, she may be giving a further clue to her own experience. These indirect clues may be significant in telling more about Linda and what she is thinking.

To Be Weighed and Measured

When we try to determine what a person is thinking, we are undertaking one of the most difficult of guessing games. Sometimes it is hard to know what we are thinking ourselves. Part of the difficulty lies in our frequent attempt to evaluate in such simple terms or generalizations as *right* or *wrong*, *good* or *bad*. Yet we know that evaluation cannot be as simple as that if it is significant evaluation. We must weigh and measure from all angles and consider the reaction of all concerned. Certainly we must consider what children are thinking if classroom evaluation is to be worth while.

Health and Safety

The Need

- ... for every child from birth through adolescence, promotion of *health*
 - ... for every child a school which is *safe* from hazards
 - ... for every child *education* for safety and *protection* against accidents to which modern living conditions subject him
- From the *White House Charter for Children and Youth*

The Facts

- 94,000 accidental deaths (1951)
- 9,400,000 accidents
- 5,900 *child deaths* from accidents in 1951 (five to fourteen years)
- One* out of every three child deaths is accidental



The need is great for observance of well understood safety rules as children are transported to and from schools and take field trips in school buses. Many modern facilities for increased learning of pupils need to be carefully planned in view of health and safety of children.

This We Believe

DO WE believe in educating the *whole child*? Of course we do. Our literature is full of references to "well-rounded development," the "wholesome environment," "integrated personality." Do we practice these ideals fully? Let us ask ourselves some questions.

Do we help children to live in such a way that they do not harm themselves, as well as others? Will they be safe as well as happy? What has been done to insure a reasonably safe environment, including playgrounds, gymnasiums, apparatus, corridors, stairways, classrooms, and the areas of travel to and from school? To what extent is *every* staff member conscious of such health matters as heating, ventilation, lighting, posture, clothing, possible physical defects, and incipient illnesses? What particular health habits do we include in our program of learning and discussion? To what extent is our program of mental hygiene coupled with accident proneness?

These and other similar questions suggest areas not covered in many current programs of education. A highly creative teacher, for example, may have an exceptionally rich learning activity going on in the classroom together with innumerable "booby traps" in terms of possible accidents to the children.

A fine school excursion may be marred by some detail in the safety factor. A building may be beautiful and functional but full of minor danger spots. Pupil participation in classroom and school affairs means increased pupil activity, and activities increase the possibilities of ac-

cidents. Is a program for creative teaching and learning well planned which has not considered fully those various factors which contribute to the health and safety of children?

Most readers will agree that a formal, bookish kind of safety education is neither desirable nor good education as we see it. Yet the safety specialists, those persons who have special interests in the prevention of accidents, are saying that there is too little awareness of safety factors among classroom teachers. They wonder if perhaps the only way to achieve results is to set up formal curriculums in safety education, as has been done for health in many places. Here is a real challenge! If we believe that good learning comes best through complete living, and that habits, attitudes, feelings, and understandings come most effectively through integrated learning experiences, we must discover ways in which these basic principles of learning may be applied to safety education.

Safety education is an abstract concept more easily reached through feeling than through intellect. Its basis is not in facts and figures alone, but also in a sense of thoughtfulness and courtesy, in habits of good citizenship, in feelings of responsibility. In this sense, it must be learned through functionally active experiences.

The problem, it seems, is one of acceptance by school people and of awareness of the problems in schools everywhere. This is a mechanical world and an increasingly dangerous one in which to live. We must accept the task of helping children to understand how to live in our complex world not only in terms of its sociological implications but also with regard to its implications for personal hazards to themselves and to

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others. The practicing of safe living should be one of the major outcomes of the educational program. The methods of good safety education are not foreign to our current philosophy, but to many teachers the problem is not clearly understood. *Acceptance* and *awareness* are the key factors. When a good teacher is aware of a situation and when he accepts it as a problem of learning, he will find a satisfactory way of dealing with it.

As we talk in staff meetings about how to improve our schools and our educational programs, about how to help our children, we should find ourselves stressing health and safety instruction just as we emphasize how to improve the teaching of reading or how to build citizenship and mental health through rich experiences. Then we will begin to talk of suitable materials and proper activi-

ties, and we will discover that there are many avenues of approach.

There are good reading materials (even comic books), films, posters, and radio programs. There is the possibility of special assemblies and exhibits. There are many opportunities for committees and other forms of pupil participation. There is a place for learning specific skills and techniques (fire drills, crossing streets, using traffic lights). There is ample opportunity for cooperative action with parents, community agencies, and with the custodian and other school personnel.

And finally, we believe that with a minimum amount of thinking and planning health and safety education may and should be made an integral part of the elementary school program.

—JAMES W. MANN

Faculties Might Well Discuss . . .

How much responsibility shall the school assume for the health and safety of its children?

How shall we assure cooperation of home and community?

Shall safety education be incidental, accidental, formal, or integrated?

How much emphasis shall be placed on making the school environment safe for children?

How much stress shall be given on learning how to live safely in a relatively unsafe environment?

Within the school who shall be responsible for the program of health and safety education? Will one person take chief responsibility, will it be divided among key persons, or will it be shared equally by all?

Shall teaching be direct or indirect? How much experience? How much drill?

What social and psychological factors should be considered in helping children to live safe, healthy lives?

How can we evaluate the program continuously and effectively?

This We Do and Say . . .

The day-by-day living of a four- or five-year-old presents many opportunities for us to establish good health habits and wholesome attitudes. The proper use of the drinking fountain, the washing of hands, covering the coughs and sneezes that come to school in spite of our vigi-

lance, caring for bumps and cuts and scratches—are all necessary for healthy living. They are also natural ways of learning about health. Praise when the child remembers and courteous reminders when he does not, help to fix essential health habits.

Our school nurse is one of the most important people in the kindergarteners' school living, and we make sure both by observation and direct experience that they learn to regard her as a good friend and "helper." Her comments as she checks them in after illness, or applies band-aids, or carries out the periodic weighing and measuring contribute in no small measure toward good attitudes and good health habits.

—FRANCES HARRIMAN

An early conference with the child's parents can help the first-grade teacher to know many things about the child's background which relate to safety and health.

A check sheet of health and safety skills is a good springboard for this first conference. Each item is marked to indicate whether the skill is "already well established" or "needs more practice." Most parents mark the need for more practice for items dealing with traffic, tool, and fire safety, as well as those dealing with sanitary precautions.

The conference gets off to an easy start when parents are asked to tell the things about John that might help him in getting off to a better start in school. Then I ask, "What's the best way to get John to do something he doesn't want to do?" Their answers tell me much about the child's attitudes toward authority and his dependability. We discuss how he will come to school (car pool, walk, safe routes) and can he be depended upon to do as they have planned.

Carefully chosen questions may be asked which reveal physical and emotional needs which are important considerations in the general health of the child.

The conference helps me to know what to watch for and how to forestall upsets and explosions, and, most important of

all, how best to satisfy the child's fundamental health and safety needs.

—MARY GREER

School buses can be modern classrooms on wheels to explore a vast laboratory of science, industry, and culture. Careful preliminary planning is most essential for guarding the health and safety of the children. The teacher must be aware of safety hazards involved throughout the trip. For first graders, especially, it is essential that there is enough competent adult assistance.

This fall there was eager anticipation of our trip to the farm. Our weeks of enthusiastic planning and discussing covered such topics as the amount and kind of clothing to wear and kind of lunch to bring. This paved the way for a discussion of certain mechanics of the trip—boarding the bus, seating, conduct on the bus, responsibility to the bus driver so as not to distract him from observing traffic signs, railroad crossings, and other safety factors. Our discussion of farm animals led to agreeing on desirable conduct during the farm tour, such as staying with the group, dangers of climbing fences and machinery, and getting too close to animals.

Parents were informed of the trip through a form notice that contained all the necessary information. Their signatures indicated permission for the children to participate. The trip indicated that the preliminary group planning was effective.

—LELA P. BERGLUND

First grade! Excited children coming to school . . . some for the first time, some walking alone for the first time . . . all happy to be that grown up. One of my first concerns is: How do these children come to school? Do they use, effectively, the proposed safe routes to school we have worked out with parents earlier?

In one attempt to make children conscious of the situation, a first grade took a walk around the neighborhood, noting all traffic helps. We found the *Slow*, *Stop*, and *School Crossing* signs; we noticed at which corner the policeman stood; we walked down to a busy intersection and watched the traffic lights, noting when the cars stopped and when pedestrians crossed.

Back in the classroom, we outlined on the floor with strips of adhesive tape various roadways and a railroad line. We made road signs of appropriate shapes, as well as a stop-and-go light (flashlight illuminated) to ease room traffic and to "protect" pedestrians. The safety discussions developed into an assembly program for mothers and other primary children. There we showed good safety practice in rhythmic form.

—ROSEMARY BEYER

At ground level, for school, I want sunshine, sanitation, good lighting, good drinking water, circulation of clean air, a clear avenue for escape in case of fire, and a comfortable amount of floor space. And isn't there a relation between the size of floor space, height of the ceiling and the number of children enrolled?

The children and I have fun while growing more mature in our understanding of health and safety. We value an orderly arrival, a peaceful atmosphere, honest praise, and some mutual regard for politeness, consistency, and detail.

—SALLY NOHELY

The fifth grade continues practicing good health habits started in the pupils' earlier experiences.

But now that the pupil is ten, he is ready for something more, and I have found no other subject as interesting and important to him as the study of the human body. He wants to know how the

bones are held together, how food moves through the alimentary canal, how babies are born, and about glands. He needs the proper vocabulary for talking about all the normal functions so he can ask the questions he wants answered. With the help of the text and reference books I try to answer all of them before we are through, whether asked openly, or slipped, unsigned, into our question box.

Parents of the children seem most appreciative of the helps given toward healthy living and are especially grateful for the wholesome attitude of children concerning their bodies.

—JANE JOLLIFFE

"We should do something" about the snowballing situation on the playground was brought up at the regular meeting of the athletic committee which was composed of two members from each classroom. The first snowfall of the year was of heavy, good packing quality, and a large snow fort had been erected in the section of the playground designated for snowball throwing.

Fifth grader: "A few kids get in the fort and everyone throws at them. I think someone is going to get hurt."

Third grader: "Mike got hurt this morning because someone threw an ice-ball at him from up close."

First grader: "We never get a chance to play on the fort because the big kids throw at us."

Sixth grader: "I make a motion that we tear down the fort and build another one off the snowball area."

After further debate and discussion the motion was passed and the fort was demolished. Also it was entered in the minutes to caution the members of the school against the use of ice and rocks in snowballs and to avoid aiming at faces because of danger to eyes.

In this example of democratic living

at the child's level, it is significant that the problem was recognized and defined in relation to the welfare of the group. Important also was the realization that

through this pooling of common problems and ideas for solution, it was possible to "do something about it."

—BILL BRICKER

Team Work Makes Safety Laws Work

Many of the pupils in our junior high school use bicycles for transportation to and from school, as well as for recreation. In order to meet many of the safety problems created by a large number of children using bicycles, a school bicycle committee was organized as a service committee of the school's selfgovernment program. Bicycle committees were also formed in the contributing elementary schools.

It soon became apparent that bicycle driving was far more than just a school problem. Safety violations were observed on a community-wide basis. Boys and girls were riding double, driving on the wrong side of the street, failing to signal on turns and stops, driving with packages in one hand, trick riding, and stripping bicycles of safety equipment like brakes, signaling devices, reflectors, and lights. These violations became the concern of the Bicycle Committees, police officers, teachers, parents, and village citizens.

The Bicycle Committee studied the problem fully and decided that a real Village Ordinance on bicycle operation was the answer. They went down to the Village Hall and found that no mention was made of bicycle regulations. In order to get more facts, the Bicycle Committee members did some research. They conducted a survey of the number and kind of accidents involving bicycles. Contact was made with other communities and the Committee studied these

ideas and laws on bicycle operation.

The members of the Committee presented their findings to the Village Council. An open meeting was held and all interested community safety groups were present. The members of the Bicycle Committee were authorized by the Village Council to frame a law. They worked, planned, revised, and rewrote, and, when the big day finally came, the students presented their law and the Village Council approved. The details of this law may be found under Article 10A, Section 742 of the Village Legal Code.

Cooperative effort by all has brought effective action in bicycle safety in our village. We passed a law which is working because it was born through team work.

Our past experience of involving children, teachers, parents, police, and civic groups has helped us to develop a program of village-wide bicycle inspection and licensing. We feel confident that our plans to broaden our bicycle safety program to include all phases of school and community safety will be enhanced because of the interest created by community planning and action.

In addition, a Village Safety Council, with representatives from all schools, from each PTA, and from the village police department, has been meeting regularly to discuss child-safety problems of the community.

—EARL M. KATZ

Involving Children . . .

Candy or Not?

If the school is to meet its responsibility as a laboratory for high-grade community living, the institutions of self-government and those for producing and distributing needed goods and services must become a part of the school program.

The institution of representative self-government, operating through the school council in Winnetka's Skokie Junior High School, chartered a non-profit corporation, *The Skokie Canteen*, a couple of years ago to provide after-school snacks for students. This corporation operates in the school along with other economic enterprises, some of them private-profit in nature, some cooperative, and some publicly owned. All of them are owned and managed by students; all of them meet problems in the conduct of their businesses requiring study, research, and decisions before they can be solved.

The Skokie Canteen is facing a problem at the moment—a problem of how to provide something to eat after school without violating good health habits. In response to popular demand, candy bars had become the main selling item. The faculty and some of the parents felt that something should be done about this

development. Rather than stepping in to prohibit the sale of candy, however, the principal suggested to the members of the Canteen Board of Directors that they make a careful study of the nutritional and dental effects of candy and revise their merchandise on the basis of their findings and in such a way as to help educate the rest of the school.

The directors spent some time wrestling with their desire to continue a thriving business and their feeling that to stop or curtail the sale of candy bars would be fatal. Gradually, however, through open-minded discussion, a plan for study evolved. The director of the village health department was invited to discuss the sale of candy with them from the standpoint of an expert in nutrition. A local dentist will later discuss candy as a cause of dental cavities.

Active participation in school-community management gives children many opportunities to see answers to health problems as real life situations, not as theories in a book. *The Skokie Canteen* as it continues its study and shares its findings with the rest of the school is dealing with a problem potent with health-learning possibilities.

—DONALD CAWELTI

Written Communications

to Parents and Children

Mimeographed publications go to parents at regular intervals to keep them informed of school activities and policies. The following three excerpts are taken from bulletins sent periodically to parents:

Time for Checking Bicycles

Now is the time to get bicycles in good condition for safe riding. You will want to check: license, horn, reflector lights, and see that brakes are in good condition. All bicycles should be ready to



Photo courtesy Public Schools, Madison, Wisc.

The Safety Patrol aids in teaching children to guard themselves against traffic accidents.

pass inspection at school on Wednesday, April 15.

Safety Patrol

The Safety Patrol boys are on duty at the various school crossings. The aims of the patrol are:

1. To protect children from automobile accidents while they are on their way to and from school.
2. To aid in teaching children to guard themselves against traffic accidents.
3. To foster qualities of leadership and good citizenship in patrol members.

The boys stand on the curb at intersections and permit children to cross only during lulls in the traffic. They do not accompany children across the street. It will promote safety if you will cooperate with the safety patrol in urging your children to follow these suggestions.

Safety Note

At this season of the year (fall), dusk is the most dangerous time of day for

bicycle riders. Even a light is of little protection. We suggest you work out the following with your children:

1. If away from home at dusk, keep off the streets and walk their bicycles home.
2. Use Scotch-lite tape on bicycles, as it protects in front, back, and on the sides.

We also communicate with children through bulletins, especially at the junior high school. The following excerpt is typical:

To Children

To Advisories (Homeroom): In the interest of the general health of the school, please stay home and away from others if you have a cold or are under par. The early isolation of colds is the only effective means of disease control. Please be stingy about sharing your infections and generous in your cooperation with control measures.—Junior High School Nurse.

Make It With and For Children

One of a series of articles from material collected by members of the Make It With and For Children Committee of ACEI, Adele Rudolph (Philadelphia), chairman.

When We Need It We Make It

THE BOYS AND GIRLS IN OUR CLASS ARE LEARNING SLOWLY that we, ourselves, can do something about our lack of furniture. If we really need it, we can make it. The sharing in making the things we need is a joy and a satisfaction to all of us.

Last term our problem was lack of painting easels; this term it was the need for a bookrack. We had visited the local library and decided to have a library corner in our classroom—a place to go to read or to work puzzles when there was a need for quiet. A bookrack was essential to the library corner.

Because there was only one easel and so many of us to use it, we had to take turns, the rest of us painting at our desks or on the floor. But soon dissatisfaction with the long wait for our turn and with the discomfort of floor painting crept in. The budget would not permit ordering more easels, so our "What shall we do about it?" finally brought out the decision to make our own.

Having found that recording our ideas was valuable for later reference, we soon had lists and stories as an outcome of our discussions under such titles as: Materials We Need; Suggestions as to Measurements; Who Will Do What; Improving Our Work.

George brought in two sturdy boxes. Placing a tall board between them and nailing strips of wood as battens on the outside, we fastened the boxes together. When the children used the easel they found their painting boards wobbled. John suggested we nail a little board at the top, one on each side of the tall board. Again they used the easel but their painting boards slipped off. This time Mary suggested that they nail a board on the edge of each box for a ledge. When the easel was used, it functioned as a good easel should. Additional easels were made with all the refinements we had learned to make in our first easel. When we painted our easels, we used radiator aluminum paint as a quick-penetrating undercoating. On our visit to the hardware store, the man had suggested this and we have found it very satisfactory.

Visits lead to further activities.

When records are used for reference, reading has meaning.

Responsibility leads to greater interest.

Ideas must stand the test of use.

Communities are full of resource people.

Our easels fit us.



A close up of some of our easels shows how the battens were used to nail boxes together.

This term the older children began bringing in their favorite books to share with the younger children. Soon we had to find a place for these story books so that they would be available when wanted. The children suggested a rack similar to the ones found in the neighborhood stores for the *Little Golden Books* and the *Wonder Books*. We were not able to get these racks. What could we do about it? "Make some," said John. *How and of what* was the next problem. We cut a piece of plywood to size to fit the selected wall space. Then we nailed a 2" x 2" piece of wood along the bottom edge for the book rest. The books slipped off, so we had to nail a strip of wood on the front to make a ledge. When we used our rack, we saw that we had space at the

top that could be utilized for another row of books. With our bookrack flat on the floor, we laid some tall books against the book rest as a means of measuring. This gave us the location for the upper book rest. We nailed in place another 2" x 2" piece and the strip for the ledge. Painting and hanging the bookrack and arranging the books in it gave us a great deal of satisfaction. Other bookracks followed, designed to fit our books as well as the wall spaces that were available.

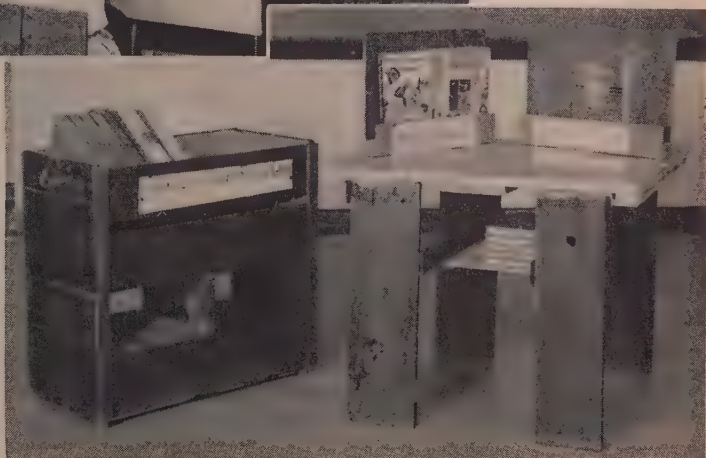
As the library corner grew, other things were added: orange crate bookshelves, a librarian's desk, and a cart to move books wherever needed in the classroom. As the work progressed we kept records similar to those we had made while making the easels. Additional stories dealt with such learnings as: Book Care; How Books Are Shelved; Books We Have Read; Parts of a Book. Other activities included being librarian, preparing a bulletin board, making original book jackets, and giving book reports.

There is satisfaction in completing and using something planned cooperatively.



The Library Corner.

Close up of book cart on domes of silence and our library table.



This sharing in a common enterprise to meet the needs of the group is a precious experience. It gives the child an opportunity to see something made from start to finish, something that means more to him because he has waited and watched and planned and helped during its construction.

—DOROTHY KOCH

Rowen School, Philadelphia



Close up of the large bookracks.



Close up of book cases and single bookracks.

To the Reader Anywhere in the World: The committee is eager to hear about things that are being done similar to these. Please share your information—descriptions, directions, recipes, drawings, photographs. Send the material to the committee in care of ACEI headquarters.

Why should YOU be in St. Paul on April 18-23 for the ACEI 1954 Study Conference? Because:

Complete Planning

"ACEI Study Conferences cannot be overrated. Complete planning is evident. Every detail to insure interest, participation, and challenge for each conferee seems to be foreseen and arranged in advance. Attendance is truly, satisfying, inspiring, rewarding."

LOUISE ORR, *Principal*
Public Schools, Amarillo, Texas.

Enriching and Stimulating

"Outstanding leadership, opportunities for individual participation in group discussions, and the fellowship of people from all over the world make an ACEI Study Conference a most enriching and stimulating experience."

FERN WEBSTER, *Kindergarten Teacher*
Public Schools, Kansas City, Mo.

Warm, Human Friendliness

"The ACEI Denver Conference was all I had expected—inspirational addresses; stimulating discussions; acquaintance with new materials and ideas. But more than that, everywhere, pervading all activities, was a warm, human friendliness that brought a smile to every face."

JEAN HANSEN, *Teacher*
Public Schools, Tucson, Ariz.

Comprehensive Program

"Denver was my first ACEI Conference. I was struck by the comprehensiveness of the program and by the zeal with which participants went about their work."

HILARY D. PARKER, *Superintendent*
Public Schools, Oak Ridge, Tenn.

See Both Trees and Forest

"Getting away to a national study conference such as ACEI broadens our perspective enough to see both the trees and the forest. Such exchange of experiences helps to keep us on the major problems of education and away from lamenting the minor irritants."

LEWIE BURNETT, *Director of Education*
Monroe (Mich.) Public Schools

For All Concerned with Children

"I wish that all who are concerned with children could have the privilege of participating in an ACEI Study Conference. It is truly a 'mountain-top' experience. Each time I return home with renewed vigor, re-inspired, filled with ideas and a will to achieve."

VIRGINIA C. MCCAULEY, *Faculty Member*
Teachers College, New Britain, Conn.

Local Committee plans for ACEI Study Conference in St. Paul



Left to right: Karen Johnson, Florence Speltz (*co-chairman*), Audrey Lloyd, Doretta McManus (*chairman*), Elizabeth Hills (*president*, St. Paul ACE), and Elsie Grime.

Make YOUR plans now to be with us in St. Paul, April 18-23!

PLAY STORE— PUPPET STAGE

An ingeniously designed piece of equipment which can be used as a play store or puppet stage. The play store is 48" high, 45" wide and 5½" deep. Three boards fit into the grooves in the sides to provide shelves for merchandise display. Wide counter board has room for cash register, telephone and other storekeeping accessories. Shelf section is backed with masonite panel. Top sign board treated with slate paint.



Turn store frame around so that masonite panel faces out. The counter becomes a puppet stage. Back shelves store puppets and properties.
 SP 101 \$17.50

HAND PUPPETS

SP 110 *Family group—mother, father, sister, brother, baby* \$9.50 set
 (Available as Negro families)

PORTABLE BLOCK CABINET

A compact cabinet built onto a platform on casters. Its distinctive features are backward tilt of the shelves to keep materials within view, removable shelf dividers for necessary adjustments in shelf sections, and easy portability. The three-shelf cabinet has a plywood back; the platform shelf is open.
 SF 122 30" high x 26" wide x 12" deep \$25.00



EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NEWS and REVIEWS

News HERE and THERE . . .

By FRANCES HAMILTON

New ACE Branches

Auburn Area Association for Childhood Education, Alabama
Georgia Teachers College Association for Childhood Education, Collegeboro
South Orange-Maplewood Association for Childhood Education, New Jersey
Greene County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee

Life Member

The ACEI welcomes Robbye Kinkade, Fayetteville, Arkansas, as a life member.

ACEI Study Conference

The December issue carried the preliminary program and registration form for the 1954 ACEI Study Conference to be held in Saint Paul, Minnesota, April 18-23. Nonmembers as well as members are invited to attend and participate in the conference. Additional registration forms and information sheets may be secured from the headquarters office of the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 Fifteenth Street, N. W., Washington 5, D. C.

ACEI Permanent Headquarters

Recent contributions in amounts ranging from \$5 to \$500 have increased the building fund until it now totals \$10,733.91.

Childhood Education at AASA

"The Importance of Education for Young Children" will be the subject for discussion at the luncheon conference sponsored jointly by the National Association for Nursery Education and the Association for Childhood Education International. The luncheon will be held at the Madison Hotel, Atlantic City, February 17, at 12:15. The program will be:

Presiding: Gertrude Chittenden, secretary treasurer, National Association for Nursery Education

Presentation of the Subject: Helen Hefferman, Division of Elementary Education, Department of Education, Sacramento, California

Discussion of the Subject: Myra Woodruff, State Education Department, Albany, New York, and president, Association for Childhood Education International.

This luncheon will afford an opportunity for school administrators and others concerned with the education of young children to come together for fellowship and work. Tickets will be on sale in the auditorium office of AASA. Those wishing to purchase a ticket in advance may do so by writing to the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200—15th St., N.W., Washington 5, D. C. and enclosing a check or money order. Tickets will be \$2.50 each.

"Improving Education of Young Children in the Face of Swelling Enrollments" will be the subject of a discussion group sponsored by NANE, ACEI, and AASA on Thursday morning, February 18, at 9:30. Charles Wilson, superintendent of schools, Highland Park, Ill., will serve as chairman of the group. Leland Jacobs, Teachers College, Columbia University, and Paul Misner, superintendent of schools, Glencoe, Ill., will present the subject.

The ACEI will maintain a booth in the exhibit hall and staff members will be available for conferences there.

Changes

George D. Stoddard, former president of the University of Illinois, has accepted the chairmanship of the Directing Committee of New York University's Self Study, now being conducted under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. The \$250,000 study is a University-wide examination of educational services and activities, with a view to evolving a long-range educational program.

Arne Randall has been appointed professor of industrial art, at Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas. Mr. Randall was formerly specialist in art education, Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C.

Children's Books in White House Library

Twenty-three books for children were among the 200 volumes presented to President Eisenhower by the American Booksellers Association.

In 1929, discovering that there was no permanent library in the White House, the American Booksellers Association appointed a committee to pick the 500 most suitable books for a typical family library. Each four years since then, they have added 200 books from the ensuing period and presented them to the President for the American people.

On-the-Spot Study of Teaching

The Department of Education of Yale University, in conjunction with the local Board of Education, is about to begin an on-the-spot study of teaching as it is practiced in the public schools of Fairfield, Connecticut. The long-range research program will be financed by the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education.

The main purpose of the project will be to study the job of elementary school teachers in relation to their professional training. It will also analyze the various duties of teachers in an attempt to decide which are professional and which are technical. This analysis will be used to determine what duties now performed by teachers might be modified, reassigned, or discontinued without affecting the essential qualities of their job.

The Yale project will also attempt to determine the influence of class size on the teacher as well as on the pupil.

At the conclusion of the first stage of the study, an experimental procedure will be put into operation in the Fairfield schools. This procedure will be based on the findings of the research project and will test their validity.

The Yale-Fairfield study, which may extend over a 10-year period, will be coordinated with a similar project, also financed by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, in Bay City, Michigan.

Fifth International Congress on Mental Health

"Mental Health in Public Affairs" is the theme for the Fifth International Congress on Mental Health to be held in Toronto, August 14-21, 1954.

The International Association for Child Psychiatry will meet August 13-14 in conjunction with the Congress on Mental Health. The theme of the Institute is "Emotional Problems of Children Under Six."

Further information may be obtained from Helen Speyer, International Service, National Association for Mental Health, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

Brotherhood Week

The week of February 21-28, 1954, will be observed nationally as the 20th annual Brotherhood Week, under sponsorship of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Suggestions for the week, as well as for year-round programs, are available from Jackie Robinson, Suite 1501, 381 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Data on Child Growth

The Child Development Laboratory of Michigan State College is the current custodian of the original Harvard Growth Data and the Stuttgart (Germany) Data collected by the Surgeon General's Office under HICOG.

The Child Development Laboratory formally extends an invitation to teachers, administrators, and others interested in the longitudinal study of children, to visit Michigan State College at any time and to observe a research program in action.

Teachers of child development in colleges and universities and teachers in public schools are particularly invited to spend several days working with the staff. Time for both laboratory and clinical experience will be provided.

Full details of the visitation plan can be secured by writing C. V. Millard, director of Child Development Laboratory and acting dean, School of Education, Michigan State College, East Lansing.

They Speak for Safety

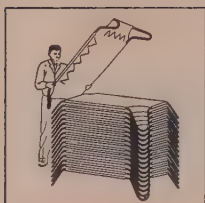
You can easily find a speaker on safety education subjects by consulting the new *Speaker's List* compiled by a committee of the Safety Education Supervisors section of the National Safety Council. The names of 185 qualified speakers in 34 states are arranged geographically, along with the subjects in which the speaker is qualified, the type of audience preferred, and tentative terms.

Single copies of this 37-page mimeographed publication are available without charge from the School and College Division, National Safety Council, 425 N. Mich. Ave., Chicago.

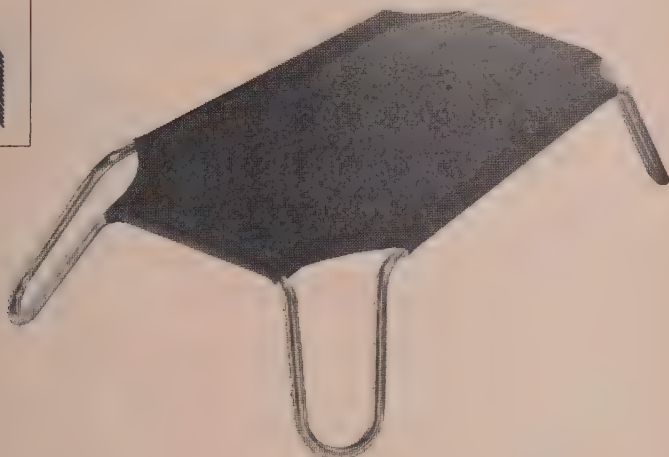
Cottage Schools

A recent article in *Parade* tells of "cottage schools." These schools, in use in El Paso, Texas, are ordinary homes designed as others in the community but with the bedrooms and living rooms left out to create one classroom. Three or four cottages make up the school unit.

stacking cots



... stack 30-high in floor space of one cot!



Specially developed for schools, this duraluminum cot is easy and economical to store, stacks out of the way in a corner. It is far sturdier than old-fashioned folding cots, has proved uniformly superior to mats, keeps children off drafty floors. So light a child can handle a cot without teacher help, so strong the duraluminum frame is *unconditionally guaranteed*. Unique U-shaped legs make a springy comfortable surface ... unlike most canvas-topped cots. Priced within reach of every school budget!

\$9.95 with white canvas, \$10.95 with blue canvas.

What school officials say about this cot:

- "... their use has greatly lessened the amount of colds suffered by our kindergarten pupils."
- "... no child has the least bit of trouble carrying his own cot."
- "... pupils are so much more comfortable on the cots than when they had to lie on the floor."
- "... (parents) have expressed great satisfaction ..."
- "... a very interesting sight to see the pupils, only 5 years of age, getting their cots and, after the rest period, stacking the cots back."

Write for full
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5 University Place, New York 3, N.Y.

Books for Children . . .

Editor, VERA PETERSEN

JOURNEY CAKE, HO! *By Ruth Sawyer.*

Illustrated by Robert McCloskey. New York: Viking, 18 E. 48th St., 1953. Pp. 45, 7¾ x 10¼ in., \$2.50. "There were three of them: the old woman, Merry; and the old man, Grumble; and Johnny, the bound-out boy. They lived in a log cabin, t'other side of Tip Top Mountain." Calamity befell them, for night after night the farm animals strayed or were stolen until all were gone. One "night the old woman said, shaking her head, 'Trouble has come. The meal chest is low, the bin is near empty. What will feed two will not feed three.' . . . The next morning by sunup the old woman had run together a piece of sacking and put straps to it, to hold Johnny's belongings. . . . On top went the Journey Cake that had been baked for him. It was large, round, and crusty-hard. 'Now be off with you!' said the old man, grumbling. 'What must be, must be.'"

And Johnny was off—but luck followed him for later that day one of the straps on his

sacking bag broke and out bounced the Journey Cake. Over and over it rolled, down the road it went, hollering out

Journey Cake, ho!

Journey Cake, hi!

Catch me and eat me

As I roll by!

All the animals it passed on the countryside ran after it. There were hens, sheep, a duck, a pig, a donkey, and a cow. On and on rolled the Journey Cake right back up to the little log cabin.

The old man and old woman came a-running, rejoicing to see Johnny and delighted with all the animals that the Journey Cake had lured along. As the old woman picked up the Journey Cake and went in to freshen it up on the griddle she sang

Warm up the Journey Cake

From now on it's Johnny Cake

Johnny, come eat it

With milk for your tea!

Here is an excellent tale for both kindergarten and primary grades! It proceeds with dispatch and has the refinement of many tellings.

(Continued on page 244)



GINN BASIC READERS

A popular series outstanding for

Its systematic program of word recognition which makes use of many methods rather than one type of attack

Its inclusion of a real poetry program

Its wealth of enrichment material in manuals and in new Enrichment Readers, two of which have just been published—Come With Us (a pre-primer) and Under the Apple Tree (a primer)

GINN AND COMPANY

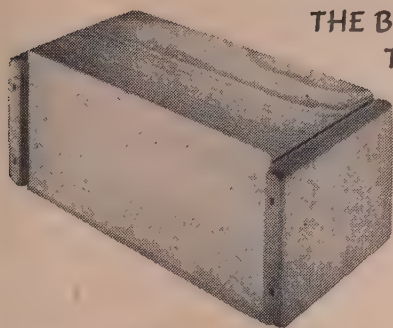
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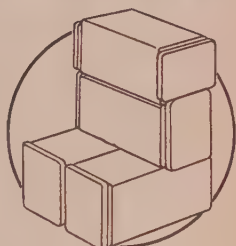
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PLAY EQUIPMENT THAT BUILDS
TOWARD READING READINESS

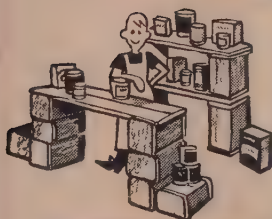
MOR-PLA JUMBO-BLOX



THE BIG HOLLOW BLOX
THAT INTERLOCK!



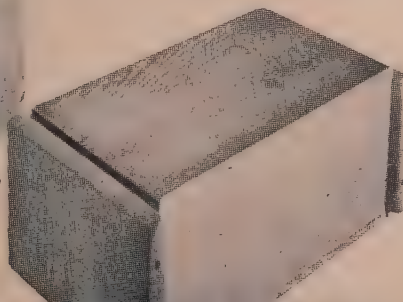
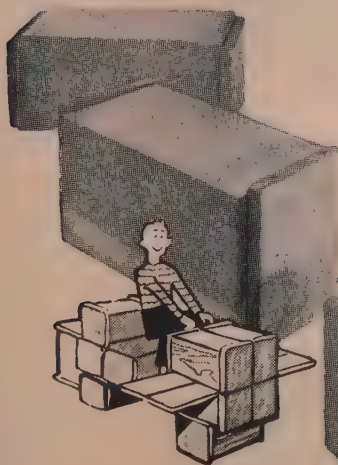
BUILD steady structures quickly, safely, with minimum teacher help! Your nursery becomes a hive of busy social play, your primaries find endless fascination in dramatizing every kind of reading experience—with Mor-Pla Blox to set the scene!



HOW? JUST SEE . . . Mor-Pla Blox are the only hollow blox that interlock! This unique feature lets the child build anything he can imagine, keeps his interest lively year by year! Mor-Pla Blox stimulate activity, develop responsibility . . . prove so versatile in providing satisfying classroom experience—that teachers who already know Mor-Pla assure us they wouldn't be without them!



STURDY construction—they'll stand up under years of rough use. Smooth, easy-to-clean finish will not chip, peel or crack. Priced in inexpensive units . . . basic No. 4 set includes twelve 12-in. Blox, four 3-ft. boards . . . builds things sketched, countless others—only \$30.



FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SET THAT
FITS YOUR GROUP'S NEEDS, WRITE TO . . .

R. H. STONE PRODUCTS
P. O. BOX 414
Detroit 31, Mich.

Books for Children

(Continued from page 242)

THE MISSION BELL. By Leo Politi. Illustrated by the author. New York: Scribner, 597 Fifth Ave., 1953. Pp. 32, 10 x 8 in., \$2.25. Children from eight to eleven who have liked Leo Politi's *Song of the Swallows* (Scribner, 1949) will be interested in *The Mission Bell*. This new book tells the old, old story of a Franciscan Father who, with a small group of followers, made the wearisome journey from Mexico up into the coastal deserts of California to establish missions.

The illustrations are of the usual high standard of Mr. Politi who draws his native California with great feeling.

Of special interest to young readers will be Diego the boy who was brought along on the expedition because he knew the language of the Indians and could act as an interpreter.

The reader is not so much impressed with the historical facts concerning a particular culture as with the sense of greatness that belongs inseparably to Father Serra's faith and his infinite kindness toward all life. As the story closes, the mission bell peals out for

the death of Father Serra, and one is left with the feeling that greatness does not die with a man. Greatness lives on in the minds and actions of those who have known him.

SEA SHELLS. By Ruth H. Dudley. Illustrated by Phoebe Erickson. New York: Crowell, 432 Fourth Ave., 1953. Pp. 149, 6½ x 8 in., \$2. If you are looking for a cliff-hanging tale to hold the attention of seven- to ten-year-olds, this is not the book you want. If, however, you would like a gentle, understanding account of marine life as it exists in shells with an emphasis on the shells themselves and how to start collecting these fascinating structures, *Sea Shells* will be indispensable to you.

There are two seasons that seem always to highlight interest in shells for children—summertime when children get a chance to do their own barefooted exploring at the edge of some water, and wintertime when some are fortunate enough to vacation but others are remembered with tokens from the sea by grownups who are traveling in Florida or California.

(Continued on page 246)

For Help in Improving Parent-Teacher Relations WATCH FOR THIS MACMILLAN SPRING PUBLICATION

COUNSELING WITH PARENTS In Early Childhood Education

by Edith M. Leonard
Dorothy D. VanDeman
Lillian E. Miles

In this book, Jane LeRoy, a fictional teacher, describes the way in which she initiates and carries through a program of counseling with the parents of her group. Her straightforward discussions in the first person show vividly the implications of counseling in action. The typical situations presented in this volume illustrate the varying types of prob-

lems in human relationships which the teacher encounters: parent group meetings, individual teacher-parent conferences, parent-visits to the school, teacher's reports to parents through conferences and notes, and the exchange of written communications between home and school. *Ready in March.*

The Macmillan Company

60 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11

"The Childhood of Famous Americans Series"

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Books for Children

(Continued from page 244)

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THE FOUR RIDERS. By Charlotte Krum.

Illustrated by Katherine Evans. Chicago: Wilcox and Follett, 1255 S. Wabash Ave., 1953. Pp. 31, 9 x 12 in., \$2. In a large gay picture book to delight the nursery-kindergarten group and to bring chuckles to young readers is the brisk and rhythmical tale of *The Four Riders*. Little listeners will soon be chanting with you, "And the old horse trotted along, along, along. *The old horse trotted along.*"

An old horse cheerfully agreed to take a duck, a goose, and a turkey for a ride on his back. The four of them met an old man who asked for a ride.

The horse said, "Certainly" but

"There is no room for him!" angrily cried the three.

"You have had your ride," said the horse.

"Get off! Get off! Get off!"

"We won't! We won't! We won't!"

"Then I'll throw you off!" said the horse . . . and throw them off he *did*! Meekly the three helped the very old man to find a stile, get on the horse, and have his ride. They then discover there is still room on the horse's back. One by one they fly up and ride too, and the old horse trotted along!"

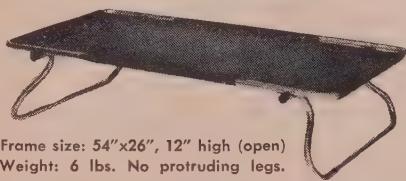
RAIN IN THE WINDS. A Story of India.

By Claire and George Loudon. Illustrated by the authors. New York: Scribner, 597 Fifth Ave., 1953. Pp. 45, 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 in., \$2.50.

Rain in the Winds tells for children from seven to ten, a terse story of life in a small village below the Himalaya Mountains, a village dependent "on the rains which change the dry season to a wet season." The book, written not only from the standpoint of geography but anthropology as well, is by two young author-artists who have themselves lived in India. They bring to their work a sense of authenticity that is so often lacking in books written by people whose research is limited to libraries.

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an immense elephant. Few will finish the book without a growing sense of cultural differences in our world.

The book is exquisitely illustrated.

THE RELUCTANT DRAGON. By Kenneth Grahame. Illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard. New York: Holiday House, 8 West 13th St., 1938 and 1953. Pp. 55, 5½ x 8 in., 2\$.

Originally published in 1938 in this country, this book has so long been out of print that its reissue this winter is indeed an occasion for rejoicing.

The Reluctant Dragon is the superb tale of a captivating, poetic (yes, even lazy) dragon who hundreds of years ago, lived in England. A shepherd discovered him, or at least part of him, protruding from a cave in the hills. In great fright the shepherd returned to his hut to report this alarming fact to his wife and young son.

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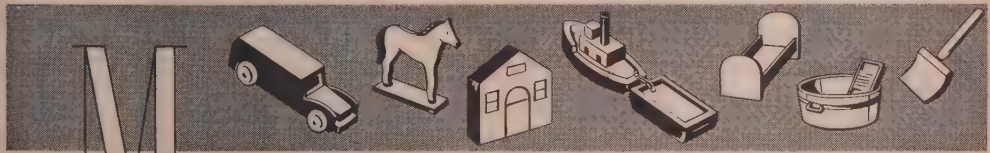
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Bulletins and Pamphlets

Editor, JAMES KNIGHT

THE WEANING YEARS. (2, 3, 4). *Prepared by a Committee from the 1951-52 Guided Observation Play Group, William H. Seward School, Rochester 8, New York, 1953. Pp. 61. 50¢.* This is an account of the "Rochester Guided Observation Play Group." It tells how mothers observed their preschool children learning to play together, to get along without their parents, and getting accustomed to the school situation they would be in later.

Following an observation, the mothers would meet in another room to talk things over. They set up their own programs to meet their own needs. They might discuss feeding problems, discipline, or sex education. They might read materials and share what they had learned, or they might learn to make toys or dolls' clothes. Whatever they undertook, they had teachers and parent education specialists to guide them, and medical and psychiatric counsel, if desired.

The bulletin has materials on speech problems of young children, father-child relationships, the child with an incurable disease, exceptional children, the basic needs of all children, discipline, and questions and answers on health problems and home problems. It lives up to its sub-title, "Highlighting the Joys and Sorrows of Young Parents."—J.K.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR EIGHTY-FIVE CENTS OR LESS. *Compiled by Elizabeth H. Gross. Bulletin No. 36. Washington, D. C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1200—15th St., N.W., 1953. Pp. 46. 50¢.* This bulletin gives an annotated listing of 707 separate titles of books for children 4 to 14 years of age. A table of contents indicates subject-matter areas; complete bibliographical entries follow with annotations that usually include some indication of the age or grade level for which each book is suited; a title index is a second key to the location of entries and annotations; and a publisher's index gives all the additional information one needs for making purchases.

Parents, teachers, librarians, and church

(Continued on page 250)



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Bulletins and Pamphlets

(Continued from page 248)

personnel who work with children will find that this bulletin has much carefully-screened information about inexpensive books and that it may be used as a balanced check list for evaluating home, school, and church libraries for children, or children's departments in public libraries. The elementary principal or supervisor who is frequently called upon to make suggestions to parents and teachers will find many occasions to use it.—J.K.

HAPPY JOURNEY—PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL. Published by: Department of Elementary School Principals, National School Public Relations Association, and National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Washington, D. C.: NEA, 1201—16th St., N.W., 1953. Pp. 32. 40¢. This pamphlet is a handbook for parents whose child will soon enter kindergarten or first grade. Suggestions are made for ways in which parents may help prepare a child for the experiences he will have at school. Parents

will learn about the skills, the experiences, and the health habits each child should have before his school days begin. Many excellent suggestions are made in regard to things the parent can do to help the child get ready to read; signs that tell when he is ready; and ways of continuing to help him after he has started reading. Ways in which the parent can cooperate with the school are outlined. The parent who reads and uses the ideas presented in this bulletin is helping prepare his child for a *Happy Journey*.—Reviewed by LOLA TULLOS.

SCHOOL CALENDAR. Prepared by Community Service Department, American Jewish Committee. New York: 386 Fourth Ave., 1953. 10¢. The alert superintendent or school executive with the responsibility of scheduling school events or for checking schedules made by others will find this *Calendar* a source of reference on Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish holy days and for legal holidays and patriotic observances. The sheets turn easily in the spiral binding and the back cardboard punches out to make it stand in ready-to-read fashion.—J.K.



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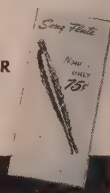
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STUDENTS AND STAFF IN A SOCIAL CONTEXT. *Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education Studies, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., 1953. Pp. 35. 50¢.* "Education in the social context applies to every member of the college community—whether administrator, teacher, trustee, or student." This brochure develops the following ideas:

1. Student activities are part of the cultural pattern of student life and, therefore, in the same fashion as in-class activities, constitute educational experiences. These cultural patterns of the campus are interrelated with those of the community at large and are influenced by them.

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Case illustrations are given and cultural solutions to some campus problems are presented. College and university administrators and staff members interested in creating democracy on the campus will find this brochure enlightening and helpful.—*Reviewed by LOLA TULLOS, Division of Extension, University of Texas, Austin.*

NOTICE

If you received a defective copy of the December 1953 issue of *Childhood Education*, return it to this office by January 10, 1954, for replacement.



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Over the Editor's Desk

Happy New Year One of the most exciting books that I read during 1953 was *A Public School for Tomorrow* (Harper, \$2.50). Written by Marion Nesbitt in beautiful prose it is actually "A Description of the Matthew F. Maury School, Richmond, Virginia." But it was more than that—it renewed my faith in people working together.

The New Year is a time for looking back and savoring what was good and looking ahead with new resolve. As I thought of friends, new and old, seen and unseen, I would like to share a quotation from the first chapter:

"Parents, some of one background, some of another, some already a part of the school, some yet to be drawn into it. Some parents knowing well the goals they seek for their children, others who have lost direction. . . . Wherever these parents live, whatever they do, whatever may have happened in their lives, they want the best for their children and seldom fail to recognize that which is good. . . .

"The children who come each school day—the large, the small, the alert, the stolid, the well-adjusted, and the not so well-adjusted. Here they are so quick with life and love, so ready for new hope and joy, with their plans and dreams and realities, and all the problems of childhood. . . .

"Teachers with the gift of color and arrangement, teachers with the gift of music and song. Some who probe deep, some who bring lightness and laughter. Teachers who give of their best to the school. Older teachers who help younger teachers, teachers ready to give strength to each other, teachers who move in to fill a gap when filling a gap is needed. Teachers who bring flowers and shrubbery, china and glass, easy chairs and window cushions, and sometimes antique furniture and the family silver. Teachers no better and no worse than teachers everywhere. . . .

"It is in the acceptance of each individual, in a feeling for people, a love for humanity, that all are bound together. . . . In this acceptance there is a released wealth of varied experiences. In this release potentialities, strengths, and limitations are revealed. And there is a willingness for limitations to reveal themselves because it is then that normal behavior appears and in this behavior is found the place where a person wants to learn. It is then that one can experiment, reject, or accept. It is

through limitations that people learn that they need each other and can so act as to supplement this need."

A Letter from Japan

Gertrude M. Lewis, of the Office of Education, shared with us a letter from Japan. Last July the third national meeting of educators responsible for the preschool education of children was held in Osaka. The group of 1300 were "teachers, masters from nursery schools, kindergartens, and primary schools."

This meeting with 1300 attendants in a country the size of California, and where the journey to the meeting may have been financed at great sacrifice by the individual and his family, is a real testimony to the value Japan places upon its young children.

In Japan, nursery schools and kindergartens overlap in meaning. The age range in some nursery schools and in some kindergartens includes children two to six years of age. Even public kindergartens are rarely restricted to children of five years, but rather enroll children at about three and retain them until after their sixth birthday.

The kindergarten is usually not a room attached to an elementary school, but an entire school, often a delightful place housing perhaps 200 young children, a dozen or more master teachers, and as many student teachers.

Next Month The February topic is "The Teacher's Role" as we consider the over-all theme for the year—"Learning At Its Best."

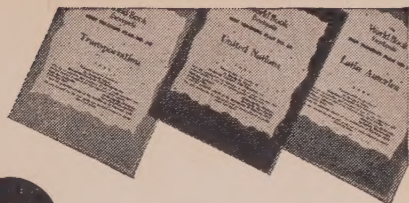
Frances Hamilton sets the tone with a discussion of the teacher's role.

Edna Long, mother of sixth-grade Stephen, shows his reaction to his teacher; Albert Edgemon, a student, discusses teachers in the making; Dorothy Bogan, a teacher, tells of the rewards of the profession; W. Theo Dalton, a teacher of teachers, tells what a teacher does; and Morris Mitchell, director of a graduate school of teacher education, provides thought on the teacher in the world today.

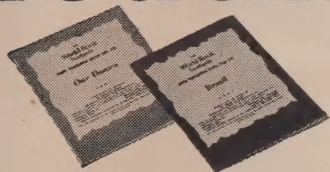
"Using Children's Questions," by Mary Dennison and Edith Patterson, shows how teaching has changed and what it means for children.

The second section has the challenging title, "More to Mathematics Than the Reckoning," and is compiled by Brenda Lansdown.

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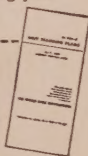
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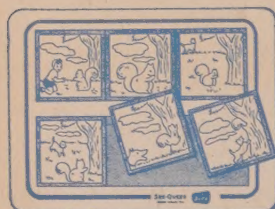
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